

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:

Engstrom, G. Eric

Application No.: 09/872,686

Filed: May 31, 2001

For: Time Slot Based Calendar
Access Control

Examiner: Cam Y. T. Truong

Art Unit: 2162

Confirmation No.: 2508

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APPELLANT'S APPEAL BRIEF

TO THE HONORABLE COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS:

This is Appellant's Brief in support of a Notice of Appeal to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences filed concurrently, appealing the decision of the Examiner in the Final Office Action mailed October 17, 2007 ("Final Office Action"), in which the claims of the above-captioned application were again rejected. Appellant respectfully requests consideration of this Appeal by the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences for allowance of the present patent application.

I. REAL PARTY IN INTEREST

The real party in interest in the above-identified application is Hall Aluminum LLC, of Los Altos, CA.

II. RELATED APPEALS

The Appellant's undersigned attorney and the assignee identified above are not aware of other appeals or interferences that would directly affect or be directly affected by, or have a bearing on the Board's decision in the subject Appeal.

III. STATUS OF THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-5, 7-17, and 29-32 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) and are presently appealed. Claims 18-28 are withdrawn.

Claims 1-5, 8-17, and 29-32 are rejected over U.S. Patent No. 4,881,179 to Vincent (Vincent) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,369,840 to Barnett et al. (Barnett).

Claim 7 is rejected over Vincent in view of Barnett and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,930,801 to Falkenhainer (Falkenhainer).

IV. STATUS OF AMENDMENTS

No amendments have been filed subsequent to the Final Office Action.

V. SUMMARY OF THE CLAIMED SUBJECT MATTER

Independent claim 1 is directed toward a computer implemented method comprising receiving an input for a first time-slot of a plurality of time-slots of a first party's calendar from a second party, the first and second parties being different parties, and the second party being associated with a group affiliation or a user type or both, and the group affiliation or user type or both having one or more defined access privileges, wherein the one or more defined access privileges are defined for specific time-slots of the plurality of time-slots of the first party's calendar; and processing the received input in accordance with the access privilege of the second party's associated group affiliation or user type or both for the first time-slot.

The subject matter of claim 1 may be found in the specification at page 9, lines 4-9; page 10, lines 1-6; page 11, lines 3-8; page 15, line 20 to page 17, line 6; page 18, line

21 to page 19, line 8; and Figures 1, 3, and 17 -19, as well as elsewhere throughout the specification.

For example, receiving an input for a first time-slot may be found at page 15, line 20 to page 17, line 6; page 18, line 21 to page 19, line 8, and Figures 6 and 17-19. The affiliation of the party in a group or user type is described, for example, at page 9, lines 4-9, (see also element 102 of Figure 1), while the access privileges for the group and/or user type are described, for example, at page 10, lines 1-6. At page 11, lines 3-8, the access privileges being defined for specific time-slots is described. Further, such a feature is provided in Figure 1, in which access (104a, 104b) is provided for time-slots (106a, 106b). Processing the input in accordance with the access privileges is provided at page 15, line 20 to page 17, line 6.

Independent claim 4 is directed toward a computer implemented method comprising receiving a request for calendar entry or entries for a first time-slot of a plurality of time-slots of a first party's calendar, wherein the request is submitted by a second party associated with a group affiliation or a user type or both, the first and second parties being different parties, and the group affiliation or user type or both having one or more defined access privileges, wherein the one or more defined access privileges are defined for specific time-slots of the plurality of time-slots of the first-party's calendar, and selectively providing calendar entry or entries for the first time-slot, in accordance with the one or more defined access privileges of the group affiliation or user type or both for the first time-slot.

The subject matter of claim 4 may be found in the specification at page 9, lines 4-9; page 10, lines 1-6; page 11, lines 3-8; page 15, line 20 to page 17, line 6; page 18, line 21 to page 19, line 8; and Figures 1, 3, 6, and 17 -19, as well as elsewhere throughout the specification.

For example, receiving a request for calendar entry or entries for a first time-slot may be found at page 15, line 20 to page 17, line 6; page 18, line 21 to page 19, line 8, and Figures 6 and 17-19. The affiliation of the party in a group or user type is described, for example, at page 9, lines 4-9, (see also element 102 of Figure 1), while the access privileges for the group and/or user type are described, for example, at page 10, lines 1-6. At page 11, lines 3-8, the access privileges being defined for specific time-slots is

described. Further, such a feature is provided in Figure 1, in which access (104a, 104b) is provided for time-slots (106a, 106b). Selectively providing calendar entry or entries for the first time-slot in accordance with the access privileges is provided at page 15, line 20 to page 17, line 6.

Independent claim 8 is directed toward a computer implemented method comprising designating by a computer system one or more defined access privileges for a plurality of time-slots of a first user's calendar for a user group or user type or both, wherein the one or more defined access privileges are defined for specific time-slots of the plurality of time-slots of the first party's calendar, determining by said computer system that a second user being a member of the user group or type or both, and granting or denying access by the computer system to a first time-slot of the plurality of time-slots to the second user in accordance with the one or more defined access privileges for the first time-slot of the user group or type or both determined for the second user.

The subject matter of claim 8 may be found in the specification at page 9, lines 4-9; page 10, lines 1-6; page 11, line 3 to page 13, line 2; page 15, line 20 to page 17, line 6; page 18, line 21 to page 19, line 8; and Figures 1, 3, 6, and 17 -19, as well as elsewhere throughout the specification.

For example, designating by a computer system one or more defined access privileges for a plurality of time-slots of a first user's calendar for a user group or user type or both are described, for example, at page 10, lines 1-6, page 11, line 3 to page 13, line 2, and Figures 1 and 17-19. At page 11, lines 3-8, the access privileges being defined for specific time-slots is described. Further, such a feature is provided in Figure 1, in which access (104a, 104b) is provided for time-slots (106a, 106b). The affiliation of the party in a group or user type is described, for example, at page 9, lines 4-9, (see also element 102 of Figure 1), while the access privileges for the group and/or user type are described, for example, at page 10, lines 1-6. Determining status of the second user and granting or denying access in accordance with the access privileges is provided at page 15, line 20 to page 17, line 6, and Figures 17-19.

Independent claim 29 is directed toward a computer readable medium comprising a storage medium, and a number of programming instructions stored in the storage

medium, and designed to program an apparatus to enable the apparatus to designate one or more defined access privileges to a plurality of time-slots of a first user's calendar for a user group or user type or both, wherein the one or more defined access privileges are defined for specific time-slots of the plurality of time-slots of the first party's calendar, to determine that a second user being a member of said user group or type or both, and to grant or deny access to a first time-slot of the plurality of time-slots to said second user in accordance with the one or more defined access privileges for the first time-slot of the user group or type or both determined for said second user.

The subject matter of claim 29 may be found in the specification at page 9, lines 4-9; page 10, lines 1-6; page 11, line 3 to page 13, line 2; page 15, line 20 to page 17, line 6; page 18, line 21 to page 19, line 8; and Figures 1, 3, 6, and 17 -19, as well as elsewhere throughout the specification.

For example, a storage medium and programming instructions may be found in at page 23, line 21 to page 24, line 15, and Figure 20. Designating by a computer system one or more defined access privileges for a plurality of time-slots of a first user's calendar for a user group or user type or both are described, for example, at page 10, lines 1-6, page 11, line 3 to page 13, line 2, and Figures 1 and 17-19. At page 11, lines 3-8, the access privileges being defined for specific time-slots is described. Further, such a feature is provided in Figure 1, in which access (104a, 104b) is provided for time-slots (106a, 106b). The affiliation of the party in a group or user type is described, for example, at page 9, lines 4-9, (see also element 102 of Figure 1), while the access privileges for the group and/or user type are described, for example, at page 10, lines 1-6. Determining status of the second user and granting or denying access in accordance with the access privileges is provided at page 15, line 20 to page 17, line 6, and Figures 17-19.

Independent claim 31 is directed toward an apparatus comprising a processor, and a calendar module operated by the processor, and adapted to facilitate designating one or more access privileges to a plurality of time-slots of a first user's calendar for a user group or user type or both, wherein the one or more access privileges are defined for specific time-slots of the plurality of time-slots of the first party's calendar, determining that a second user being a member of said user group or type or both, and granting or

denying access to a first time-slot of the plurality of time-slots to said second user in accordance with the one or more defined access privileges for the first time-slot of the user group or type or both determined for said second user.

The subject matter of claim 31 may be found in the specification at page 9, lines 4-9; page 10, lines 1-6; page 11, line 3 to page 13, line 2; page 15, line 20 to page 17, line 6; page 18, line 21 to page 19, line 8; and Figures 1, 3, 6, and 17 -19, as well as elsewhere throughout the specification.

For example, a processor may be found in at page 23, line 21 to page 24, line 15, and Figure 20. A calendar module may be found described at page 9, lines 4-9, and Figure 1. Designating by a computer system one or more defined access privileges for a plurality of time-slots of a first user's calendar for a user group or user type or both are described, for example, at page 10, lines 1-6, page 11, line 3 to page 13, line 2, and Figures 1 and 17-19. At page 11, lines 3-8, the access privileges being defined for specific time-slots is described. Further, such a feature is provided in Figure 1, in which access (104a, 104b) is provided for time-slots (106a, 106b). The affiliation of the party in a group or user type is described, for example, at page 9, lines 4-9, (see also element 102 of Figure 1), while the access privileges for the group and/or user type are described, for example, at page 10, lines 1-6. Determining status of the second user and granting or denying access in accordance with the access privileges is provided at page 15, line 20 to page 17, line 6, and Figures 17-19.

VI. GROUND OF REJECTION TO BE REVIEWED ON APPEAL

Whether claims 1-5, 8-17, and 29-32 are unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 4,881,179 to Vincent (Vincent) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,369,840 to Barnett et al. (Barnett).

Whether claim 7 is unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Vincent in view of Barnett and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,930,801 to Falkenhainer (Falkenhainer).

VII. ARGUMENT

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

As is well established, the Examiner bears the initial burden of factually supporting any *prima facie* conclusion of obviousness. See MPEP 2142. To establish a *prima facie* conclusion of obviousness the factual basis must show (1) a sufficient reason to combine the teachings of the references; (2) a reasonable expectation of success; and (3) the combined teachings must teach or suggest all of the claim elements. The Supreme Court in *Graham v. John Deere Co.* set out the inquiries necessary to develop this factual basis. 383 U.S. 1, 17-18 (1966); see also MPEP 2141. These inquiries include determining the scope and content of the prior art; ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue; and resolving the level of ordinary skill in the art.

The Examiner has clearly failed to provide a sufficient factual basis to support a *prima facie* case of obviousness of claims 1-5, 7-17, and 29-32 over any combination of the cited references.

In particular, ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue requires interpreting the claim language, and considering both the invention and the prior art references as a whole. See MPEP 2141.02. This has not been done, as further detailed below.

Claims 1-5, 8-17, and 29-32

With respect to claim 1, the cited references, individually or in combination, do not teach or suggest a computer implemented method comprising receiving an input for a first time-slot of a plurality of time-slots of a first party's calendar from a second party, the first and second parties being different parties, and the second party being associated with a group affiliation or a user type or both, and the group affiliation or user type or both having one or more defined access privileges, wherein the one or more defined access privileges are defined for specific time-slots of the plurality of time-slots of the first party's calendar; and processing said received input in accordance with the access privilege of the second party's associated group affiliation or user type or both for the first time-slot.

Vincent discloses a calendaring system in which various security levels may be defined based on the desired security access for various events. There is no teaching or suggestion of the above discussed time-slot based calendaring method.

In particular, Vincent does not teach or suggest defining access privileges based

on specific time-slots as recited in claim 1. Instead, Vincent defines access based on an event security level, or assigning security access privileges to an individual so that such an individual may access events at or below their security access level. Claim 1 specifically recites “wherein the one or more defined access privileges are defined for specific time-slots of the plurality of time-slots of the first party’s calendar” which is clearly distinguishable from Vincent in which access privileges are defined for specific events, or assigned to individuals to determine which events they can access.

Claim 1 thus provides a novel method in which the access privileges for one or more parties may be defined specifically based on specific time-slots. In this manner, a user may control access to his/her calendar during the specific time-slots without regard for the particular type of event(s) being read from or written to those time-slots (assuming no further added element based on events, etc.).

The Final Office Action refers to Figure 5 of Vincent as an example of access permissions for time-slots. In Figure 5, there are two entries on the calendar that read “ACCESS PERMISSION REQUIRED”. However, the access permissions are not provided for the time-slots of 5-6pm and 8pm, but rather for the Secret and Personal events that are scheduled in those time-slots (see Figure 4B). Thus, when the viewing party views the calendar (view shown in Figure 5), because the events at 5pm and 8pm have security access levels greater than the viewer, access to the events at those times is blocked. However, such a system merely defines the access privileges of the viewing party by the access level of the event.

Alternatively, using the method of claim 1, a “second party” may be provided access to an exemplary time-slot of 9am-5pm Monday through Friday of the “first party’s calendar” such that the second party can read and/or write data to the first party’s calendar from 9am-5pm Monday through Friday. In such an example, an event has not been defined as part of the access privilege, instead an access level has been defined which indicates whether or not, and to what extent, the second party can access the first party’s calendar during a particular time period (in this example, 9am-5pm Monday through Friday) and then read and/or write data.

By comparison, Vincent allows a first party to enter an event into his/her calendar and to indicate in that event the security level access for that event. Then, a second

party possessing that level of security access can later view the event regardless of the time-slot in which that event falls. Thus, the access is defined for the event, not for the time-slot. Again, claim 1 is distinguishable by specifying that “the one or more defined access privileges are defined for specific time-slots”.

Clearly, Vincent uses event-based access privileges and claim 1 defines time-slot based access privileges.

In addition, Vincent allows the assignment of a security access level to an individual, which allows that individual to access events that are at or below that individual's access level. In this regard, the Office Action cites Column 9, line 53 through Column 10, line 15, for a teaching of access levels. However, the 5 access levels simply define which events an individual may view depending on the individually defined security levels of the events and the individual's designated security access level, not the defined time-slots to which the individual has been granted access. Thus, in accordance with Vincent, if a first party has entered two events into his/her calendar, one that is Confidential and one that is Unclassified, a second party having a permission level of Unrestricted would only be able to view the second of those two events regardless of the time-slots in which those events occur. That is because the security access of Vincent is event-driven, whereas the security access defined in claim 1 is time-slot based. Furthermore, in Vincent, when an individual is assigned a particular security access permission level (see Column 9, lines 62-65), the designation is for that particular individual with no bearing on or connection to any particular time-slot. Clearly the intention of the system in Vincent is to maintain security of events so that certain parties are not permitted to view certain events. Quite differently, claim 1 provides a user (calendar owner) control over the particular time-slots to which various parties have access.

Further, embodiments of the invention allow for the creation of communities connected through the calendar system and, in part, based on the defined time-slots. An example of such a community provided in the specification is for students and teachers, in which a student may grant a teacher access privileges only during the school hours. Thus, in an example, a student may grant a teacher read/write access to his/her calendar during the hours of 10am to 5pm (Monday and Wednesday), and as a result the teacher

may read/write to the student's calendar for the time-slot of 10am-5pm (Monday and Wednesday). Without a further added element, the teacher would have the ability to read/write to the student's calendar only during the defined time-slot and regardless of the type of event(s) present.

Barnett is cited in combination with Vincent. Barnett teaches the creation of group calendars in which the members of the group may read/write to the calendar and different levels of access may be provided to each member. However, Barnett does not teach or suggest defining access privileges based on specific time-slots as recited in claim 1. Barnett is cited for teaching the group calendar creation, but such a teaching merely provides for access to other calendars within a group. The "levels of access" are not further defined, and only teach event-based access, similar to that described in Vincent.

Both Vincent and Barnett thus teach the concept of event-based access to a shared calendar. In these references, as long as the access privilege of the user and the access level of the event match, the user will gain access to the event whenever that event occurs and, thus, the access privileges of the references are clearly event-based.

However, neither reference teaches or suggests time-slot based access privileges. As mentioned above, such a provision, as recited in claim 1, provides a function not taught or suggested by the cited references. Namely, claim 1 allows for an access privilege to be defined for one or more time-slots. Such a system allows for granular control of an individual's calendar and avoids, for example, having events scheduled outside the time-slots the user deems acceptable for particular individuals to schedule events. Meanwhile, claim 1 permits open access to the specified time-slots to those users granted access (absent further restrictions based on type of events, etc.).

As such, Vincent and Barnett, individually or in combination, do not teach or suggest the features of claim 1 as discussed above. Therefore, when viewed as a whole, claim 1 is patentable over Vincent and Barnett, individually or in combination.

Independent claims 4, 8, 29, and 31 include in substance the same features as described above for claim 1. Thus, for at least the above stated reasons, claims 4, 8, 29, and 31 are not obvious and are patentable over the Office Action's proposed combination of Vincent and Barnett.

Claims 2-3, 5, 9-17, 30, and 32 depend, directly or indirectly, from either claim 1, 4, 8, 29, or 31, incorporating their features. Therefore, for at least the same reasons discussed above, claims 2-3, 5, 9-17, 30, and 32 are patentable over the combination of Vincent and Barnett.

Claims 3 and 12

Further to the arguments presented above, claims 3 and 12 provide for an access privilege having the ability to write data into the first time-slot (see line 3 of claim 3, and line 4 of claim 12). The “write” feature of claims 3 and 12 provides a granular grant of write privileges for a time-slot.

Claims 3 and 12 are rejected over the combination of Vincent and Barnett. The Office Action points to Figures 4A and 5 of Vincent, which, in fact, do not provide such a feature.

Furthermore, on page 2 of the Final Office Action, it is mentioned that the write feature may be provided in Falkenhainer, although claims 3 and 12 are only rejected over Vincent and Barnett. The prior Office Actions admitted the failure of Vincent, by stating that “Vincent does not explicit teaches the claimed limitation ‘wherein the access privileges include an access privilege with an ability of writing an entry into said first time-slot.’” Since Vincent is cited for providing this feature in the rejection of claims 3 and 12, claims 3 and 12 appear to be patentable over the cited combination of Vincent and Barnett.

Claim 7

Claim 7 depends from claim 4, incorporating its features. Therefore, for at least the same reasons discussed above, claim 7 is patentable over the combination of Vincent and Barnett. Falkenhainer fails to overcome the deficiencies of Vincent and Barnett. Thus, claim 7 is patentable over the combination of Vincent, Barnett, and Falkenhainer.

In addition, Falkenhainer was cited for teaching access privilege with a write function. The cited portion of the reference reads “According to the present invention, individual files within the file system 12 are each associated with what is here called an

“object.” In the present context, an ‘object’ associated with a file in file system 12 is a set of metadata, or in other words, a field or string of data, which describes the access properties (read and/or write permissions), hierarchical relations, and other properties of the file.” Such a description does not teach providing access privileges that include an ability of writing an entry into a first time-slot and an ability of viewing an entry in the first time-slot, as recited in claim 7. The write access described in Falkenhainer is provided file-by-file and provides no indication of time-slot based access.

Furthermore, the Office Action fails to provide a clear indication why such a combination would be made. There is merely a conclusory statement that “[i]t would have been obvious to a person of an ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to apply Falkenhainer’s teaching of access privilege with an ability of writing to Vincent’s system in order to prevent [a] non-authority user to modify an owner’s calendar without permission and further to allow a owner of a record to update a entry in a record.” Thus, the Office Action fails to establish a prima facie case of obviousness. A statement that one would have been motivated to make the combination cited in the Office Action because such a combination would prevent unauthorized users from modifying an owner’s calendar simply states a purpose of embodiments of the present invention. At no point, does the Office Action provide any indication of the reasoning behind such a combination, but rather simply states the combination may be beneficial. In fact, the file-by-file accesses granted in Falkenhainer have little to do with the time-slot based read and write privileges defined in claim 7. For this additional reason, claim 7 is patentable over the combination of Vincent, Barnett, and Falkenhainer.

VIII. CONCLUSION

Appellant respectfully submits that all the appealed claims in this application are patentable and requests that the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences overrule the Examiner and direct allowance of the rejected claims.

This brief is submitted with a check for \$510 or an authorization to charge a deposit account to cover the appeal fee for one other than a small entity as specified in 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(c). We do not believe any other fees are needed. However, should that

be necessary, please charge Deposit Account No. 500393. In addition, please credit any overages to the same account.

SCHWABE, WILLIAMSON & WYATT, P.C.

Dated: January 10, 2008

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CLAIMS APPENDIX

1. (Previously Presented) A computer implemented method comprising:
receiving an input for a first time-slot of a plurality of time-slots of a first party's calendar from a second party, the first and second parties being different parties, and the second party being associated with a group affiliation or a user type or both, and the group affiliation or user type or both having one or more defined access privileges, wherein the one or more defined access privileges are defined for specific time-slots of the plurality of time-slots of the first party's calendar; and
processing said received input in accordance with the access privilege of the second party's associated group affiliation or user type or both for the first time-slot.
2. (Previously Presented) The method defined in claim 1, further comprising defining, before said receiving, the access privileges of the group affiliation or user type or both, for the plurality of time-slots of said calendar.
3. (Previously Presented) The method defined in claim 1, wherein the access privileges include a first access privilege with an ability to read data of said first time-slot, and an ability to write data into the first time-slot.
4. (Previously Presented) A computer implemented method comprising:
receiving a request for calendar entry or entries for a first time-slot of a plurality of time-slots of a first party's calendar, wherein the request is submitted by a second party associated with a group affiliation or a user type or both, the first and second parties being different parties, and the group affiliation or user type or both having one or more defined access privileges, wherein the one or more defined access privileges are defined for specific time-slots of the plurality of time-slots of the first-party's calendar; and
selectively providing calendar entry or entries for the first time-slot, in accordance with the one or more defined access privileges of the group affiliation or user type or both for the first time-slot.
5. (Previously Presented) The method defined in claim 4, further comprising defining,

before said receiving, the access privileges of the group affiliation or user type or both, for the time-slots of said calendar.

6. (Cancelled).

7. (Previously Presented) The method defined in claim 4, wherein the access privileges include an access privilege with an ability of writing an entry into said first time-slot and an ability of viewing an entry in said first time-slot.

8. (Previously Presented) A computer implemented method comprising:
designating by a computer system one or more defined access privileges for a plurality of time-slots of a first user's calendar for a user group or user type or both, wherein the one or more defined access privileges are defined for specific time-slots of the plurality of time-slots of the first party's calendar;
determining by said computer system that a second user being a member of said user group or type or both; and
granting or denying access by the computer system to a first time-slot of the plurality of time-slots to said second user in accordance with the one or more defined access privileges for the first time-slot of the user group or type or both determined for said second user.

9. (Previously Presented) The method defined in claim 8 wherein said second user has a user identification identifiable to the user group or type or both.

10. (Previously Presented) The method defined in claim 8 further including reading into said computer system said second user's user identification and said access privileges.

11. (Previously Presented) The method defined in claim 8 further including the computer system facilitating said first user in providing said user group or type or both, and said access privileges.

12. (Previously Presented) The method defined in claim 8 further including the computer system facilitating the second user in inputting data into the first time-slot, the user group or type or both having an access privilege to the first time-slot including an ability to write data into the first time-slot.

13. (Previously Presented) The method defined in claim 8 wherein said calendar includes an event that spans the first and at least a second time-slot, and the method further comprises said computer system omitting descriptive data of said event when said second user accesses said first time-slot, if said user group or type or both does not have read access to all of said at least a second time-slot, even if said user group or type or both has read access to said first time-slot.

14. (Previously Presented) The method defined in claim 8 further including the computer system facilitating the second user in editing data for the first time-slot, creating an event record for the first time-slot, inserting data into the first time-slot, deleting data or an event record or both from the first time-slot, in accordance with the access privilege of the user group or type or both for the first time-slot.

15. (Previously Presented) The method defined in claim 8 wherein first time-slot includes a time-slot of one specific date, a corresponding time-slot on each of a number of week days of a week, or a corresponding time-slot on each of a week day of a number of weeks.

16. (Previously Presented) The method defined in claim 8 further including the computer system facilitating the second user in categorizing at least one of a meeting, an appointment, a reminder, an event, an anniversary, a family event, a school meeting, and a social event for said first user's calendar.

17. (Previously Presented) The method defined in claim 8 wherein said granting or denying access is further based on an event type of an event to be read from or written

into said first time-slot by said second user.

18. (Withdrawn) An article of manufacture including one or more computer-readable media having stored thereon a plurality of programming instructions for implementing a computer-hosted calendar to be executed by at least one processor, that when executed perform the following operations:

designate to a user of said calendar a specific access ability based on a characteristic of said user;

process a request to access said calendar based on said characteristic based designated access ability.

19. (Withdrawn) The article of manufacture defined in claim 18, wherein said specific access ability includes an ability to perform at least one of read data from only specific read-data time-periods of said calendar, and write data into only specific write-data time-periods of said calendar; and wherein said process includes at least one of retrieve data for said user in conformance with said read-data time-period specification, and update said calendar in conformance with said write-data time-period specification.

20. (Withdrawn) The article of manufacture defined in claim 18 wherein said operations further include before said designate,

associate with each of at least one user characteristics an access ability to said calendar, with each associated access ability including an ability to at least perform one of only read data from specific read-data time-periods of said calendar, and only write data into specific write-data time-periods of said calendar; and wherein said designated specific access ability includes the associated access ability corresponding to said characteristic of said user.

21. (Withdrawn) The article of manufacture defined in claim 18 wherein said operations include read from an administrative user of said calendar said characteristic and the specific access ability to be designated before said designating.

22. (Withdrawn) The article of manufacturing defined in claim 18 wherein said operations include read from an owner of said calendar said characteristic and said specific access ability to be designated.

23. (Withdrawn) The article of manufacturing defined in claim 18 wherein said characteristic includes one of an individual identifier, a group affiliation, and a user type.

24. (Withdrawn) The article of manufacturing defined in claim 18 wherein said specific access ability includes an ability to read data from specific read-data time-periods of said calendar, and wherein if said calendar includes at least one event that spans a plurality of time-periods, with only some of which are read-data time periods, and each of said at least one event includes both time-period data and descriptive data, then said process includes reading data from said specific read-data time periods and omitting said descriptive data.

25. (Withdrawn) The article of manufacturing defined in claim 18 wherein said operations include read from an owner of said calendar, before said designate, a first characteristic and an associated first specific access ability, and at least one second characteristic that is assigned the specific access ability associated with said first characteristic, and wherein if said user characteristic is equivalent to one of said at least one second characteristic, said user is designated said first access ability as its specific access ability.

26. (Withdrawn) The article of manufacturing defined in claim 18 wherein said process includes, if said designated specific access ability includes an ability to write into said calendar for specific write-data time-periods, process a request to write data into said calendar for said write-data time –periods, and if said designated specific access ability includes an ability to read data from said calendar for specific read-data time-periods, process a request to read data from said calendar for said read-data time-periods.

27. (Withdrawn) The article of manufacturing defined in claim 18 wherein said specific

access ability includes an ability to perform at least one of read data from only specific event type time-periods of said calendar, and write data into only specific event type read-data time periods of said calendar; and wherein said process includes at least one of retrieve data for said user in conformance with said read-data time-period specification, and update said calendar in conformance with said write-data time period specification.

28. (Withdrawn) The article of manufacturing defined in claim 18 wherein said process further includes said user updating said calendar with specified event type data.

29. (Previously Presented) A computer readable medium comprising:
storage medium; and
a number of programming instructions stored in the storage medium, and
designed to program an apparatus to enable the apparatus to
designate one or more defined access privileges to a plurality of time-slots of a
first user's calendar for a user group or user type or both, wherein the one or
more defined access privileges are defined for specific time-slots of the
plurality of time-slots of the first party's calendar,
determine that a second user being a member of said user group or type or both,
and
grant or deny access to a first time-slot of the plurality of time-slots to said second
user in accordance with the one or more defined access privileges for the first
time-slot of the user group or type or both determined for said second user.

30. (Previously Presented) The storage medium of claim 29 wherein the programming instructions are further adapted to enable the apparatus to perform said granting or denying access based on an event type of an event to be read from or written into said first time-slot by said second user.

31. (Previously Presented) An apparatus comprising:
a processor; and

a calendar module operated by the processor, and adapted to facilitate designating one or more access privileges to a plurality of time-slots of a first user's calendar for a user group or user type or both, wherein the one or more access privileges are defined for specific time-slots of the plurality of time-slots of the first party's calendar, determining that a second user being a member of said user group or type or both, and granting or denying access to a first time-slot of the plurality of time-slots to said second user in accordance with the one or more defined access privileges for the first time-slot of the user group or type or both determined for said second user.

32. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 31 wherein the calendar module is further adapted to perform said granting or denying access based on an event type of an event to be read from or written into said first time-slot by said second user.

EVIDENCE APPENDIX

None.

RELATED PROCEEDINGS APPENDIX

None.